Obituary—Professor A. D. Ross

On December, 14, 1966, at Albany, Western Australia, Professor Alexander David Ross died, peacefully after a short illness, at the age of 83.

Born in Glasgow in 1883, Professor Ross had a distinguished career at the University of Glasgow, where in 1905 he was Thompson Research Fellow. In 1906 as Houldsworth Research Fellow he studied at the University of Gottingen, and in 1908 was appointed Lecturer in Natural Philisophy at the University of Glasgow. His research interests were in the fields of magnetism and spectroscopy. In recognition of his researches the University of Glasgow in 1914 awarded him the Kelvin Medal, of which he was the first recipient.

Upon the foundation of the University of Western Australia, Professor Ross was appointed in 1912 to the Chair of Mathematics and Physics. He arrived in Perth to take up duties early in 1913. In that year classes commenced. When in 1929 Mathematics and Physics were separated he took over the Chair of Physics until his retirement in 1952. Except for a visit to Europe during World War I and again in 1951, Professor Ross gave uninterrupted service as teacher, scientific investigator and consultant, and administrator over a period of nearly 40 years. He was the last in office of the eight foundation Professors. By his students he will be remembered, particularly as a teacher, clear in exposition, thorough in treatment, and considerate to all who were zealous in their aspiration to academic distinction.

Professor Ross played a distinguished part in building up the University tradition in the State of Western Australia as Professor of Mathematics and Professor of Physics, and in the numerous posts he has held in scientific and other organisations within and without the University. He and other Professors, coming from abroad in the early days of Australian Universities, had the distinction of being agents for the transmission of higher educational standards and sound cultural traditions to the State of Western Australia.

In addition to his services to many other organisations within and beyond Western Australia Professor Ross served on the Council of the Royal Society during 1930-31 and 1939-1942, and was President for three terms—1923-24, 1924-25 and 1940-41.